

St. Joseph's College  
245 Clinton Avenue  
Vol.2.iv

# The Spirit

## Staying Ahead of the Curve

By Roseangela Fracchiolla

On November 30th, crowds packed into the Tuohy Hall auditorium to hear an inspirational and humorous lecture from acclaimed writer Colson Whitehead. Colson Whitehead has received many awards, including being named a MacArthur Genius. His most recent book, "Zone One," a New York Times Best seller, deals with zombies, American culture, and civilization.

The dry witted writer began his lecture with a few words about his personal journey. In true comedic and artistic fashion he began by quoting Steve Martin's character from "The Jerk," citing the "I was just a small black boy growing up under the hot Mississippi sun" routine. In reality, this native New Yorker was born and raised in Manhattan, growing up on the fantasy of the comic book world. Like many of us, it was not until college that he began reading more contemporary work such as Beckett and Borges, "a genre of writers he classifies as "high realism."

One of the most resonant pieces of information from Whitehead's lecture is an anecdote from his first job experience. He was working in the book section at the prestigious publication "The Village Voice," and his responsibility was to sort through hundreds of book shipments. The greatest part of this position was if you wanted it badly enough, and you hung

around, they would throw an assignment your way. That is just what Colson did. This is a lesson for any young adult working to get ahead in their field: always stick around, and always let others know you are available, because sometimes it leads to a game changer.

Colson Whitehead raised an important couple of points that transcend the writing world. First, your life's work is all about show-and-tell, even beyond the age of seven. You must always have the confidence to put your work forward and let the subject of your work find you, because when you learn just what it is that inspires you it is a one-of-a-kind type of romance. He mentions the word "relativism" when discussing the subject matter of originality. The fact remains that there are seven billion people in the world and without exploring all options, there will never be anything of significance created, even if that "thing of significance" is a pop-culture based novel about a Gary Coleman-esque child star (one of Colson's early works that never made it to publishing). These are the ways in which we will stay connected-- trying, sometimes succeeding, and learning from our failures.

This idea was the theme of the lecture. There are no rules; that is one of those things you learn in your show-and-tell days. Mr. Whitehead reminds the audience to "keep ahead of the curve." Often times, there is greater

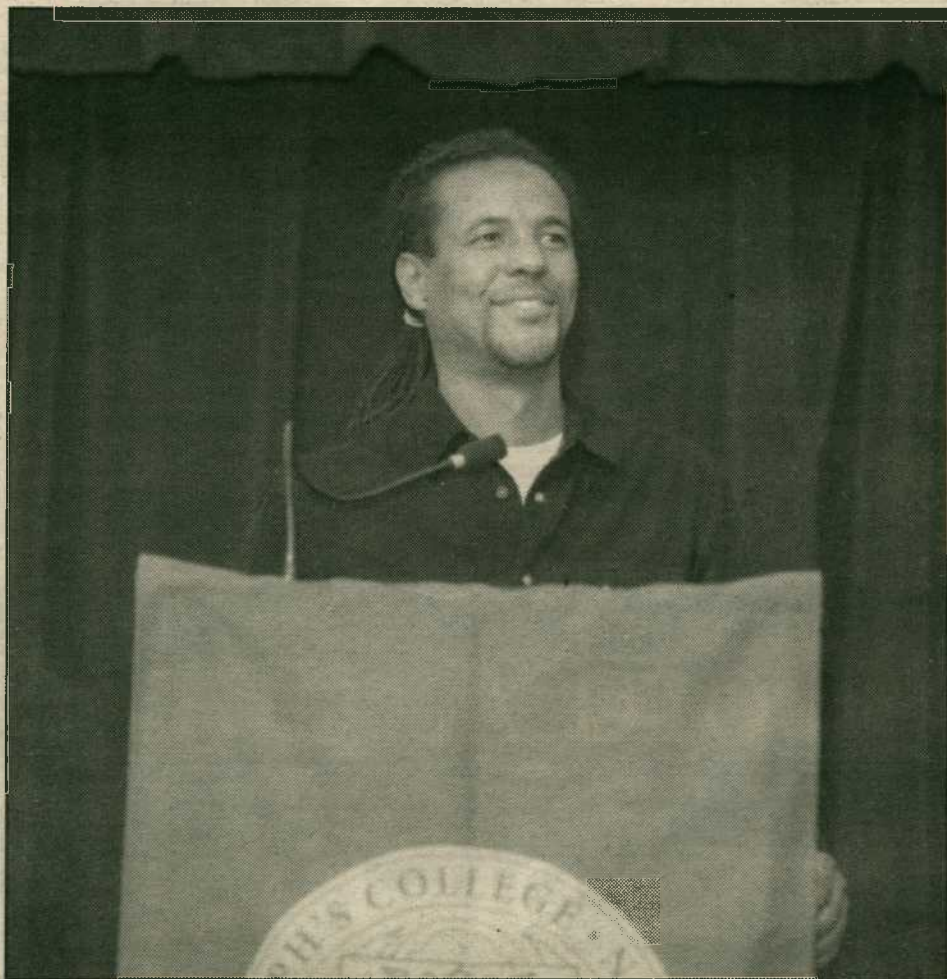


Photo Credit: Robert Amsler

NY Times bestselling author and MacArthur Fellowship recipient Colson Whitehead speaking in the Tuohy Hall Auditorium.

significance in what is not said as opposed to what is said. Use writer's block to your advantage: it is there for a reason, it is a moment to focus on something different, possibly greater. Ultimately, if you want someone to love your work and love you, you have to

love yourself before the showing and telling. Even if being yourself means writing a Manhattan based, post-apocalyptic novel, Colson Whitehead sums it up: "Listen to your heart, if it is true, then let it be."

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## Muslim Student Association Forms at SJC

By Jessica Jacobbe

The word "Islam" is translated literally to "peace." When people today hear about Islam, they may conjure up conclusions and stereotypes about Muslims and their religion, but at St. Joseph's, the new Muslim Student Association is working to change that. This club was formed in October, when a group of students decided to make Islamic awareness present in the rest of the school.

The moderator of the association is Najat Amachki, the current Assistant Director of Career Development, Wellness, and Disability Services. She

was having a conversation with the current CEO of the club, Ms. Tahirovic, and her friends, about how other students should know more about Islam and its traditions. Thus, the Muslim Student Association was formed under the guidance of Ms. Amachki, and much to her surprise, many students attended the first meeting, and more are expected to come to the following.

The goal of this association is to spread awareness of the Islamic culture, and kill the stereotypes and false ideas that people may have about it. The club believes that students should have some knowledge about the culture and religion, which is what this new association is for. In today's

world, everyone should be open to several cultures and have an understanding for different points of view. Ms. Amachki, says that the club provides students with the opportunity to talk about Islam, and for the Islamic community to provide others with knowledge about their beliefs.

The club is not centered on Islam alone. All students are encouraged to interact and engage with different communities and religions. One of the events being planned for the club is for a speaker to come and talk about the Islamic, Christian, and Jewish religions. This is an opportunity for students to open their minds, and learn about the various cultures and ideas.



Turn to the middle of the paper for our holiday special!



Turn to the Arts & Entertainment section for reviews of "Gypsy," "The Muppets," the SJC Dance Concert, and more!



Get a look at the new FIAT 500 in the Sports section



# Driving a Stake Into Wasted Energy

By Antoinette Cammarano

Going "Green" is a nation-wide movement, however, there is more to it than simply recycling. Energy is being wasted in everyday circumstances, and this harms the environment just as much, if not more, than not recycling does. There are many programs for New York to become a "greener" state, and in St. Joseph's College, Go Green Generation Waking Up, otherwise known as the Go Green Club, has started its own program to cut down on the waste of energy in school. This is being done through the Energy Vampire Slayers, an initiative that began on Halloween, and hopes to work well into the following semesters.

When we think of vampires, our minds conjure images of grotesque creatures that live in darkness and shadows because they burn in the light (unlike the "Twilight" vampires who simply sparkle).

But the vampires the Go Green Club are out to slay are vampires of a less terrifying but equally dangerous nature. "Vampire Power" is an actual term used to describe standby power. These are the technical terms used to describe the waste of energy that is produced when electronics that are not being used are left plugged in. The power being used by leaving these electronics inactive is not only harmful to the environment, but also accounts for higher energy bills.

Therefore, the Energy Vampire Slayers play a vital role in reducing the amount of energy wasted daily in St. Joseph's College. The members of the program, which was the brainchild of S. Susan Wilcox, moderator of Go Green Generation Waking Up, can be seen shutting light switches in unused classrooms on any given day. Members were chosen

from the club to partake in this program; however, they had to be commissioned by S. Elizabeth to complete their tasks. As these "vampire slayers" walk around shutting off the lights, they leave a little sticker on the light switch. This sticker acts as both a reprimand and a reminder; it informs the professor that they should not be leaving the lights on, and reminds them not to do it in the future.

As these vampire hunters do their part to cut down on wasteful energy and make the world a greener place to live, are you doing yours? Shutting off light switches when the room is not in use, or is lit brightly by outside light, is not a strenuous task. Taking an extra few seconds to unplug wires not in use, and shut off lights is a small effort, but it has big results in saving our environment.



Photo Credit: Robert Napolitano

On Oct. 31 S. Elizabeth commissioned the Go Green-Gen UP Club as Energy Vampire Slayers.

## Word Around Campus: How Do You Prep for Finals?

Jam Evangelista -  
Freshman



Note/Flash cards are what I believe to be the most efficient way to prepare for finals. Most importantly, I need to just take the time out to study.

Angelique Sherwood -  
Freshman



I am going to take a couple of hours each day prior to the exam to study. I am also going to get extra help.

Christina DellaRocca -  
Junior



I am typing up my notes to study from, and I am making flash cards. I will also use acronyms to help me study.

Maureen Donohue -  
Junior



I'm going to study at swim practice by making my teammates quiz me before practice and in the pool.

Justina Pierre -  
Junior



I am camping out in the SJC Library and I'm never going home. It's all about studying and finishing up final papers.

Michelle Connor -  
Senior



I will be spending a lot of my time in the SJC Library. I have a lot of difficult classes, so I should start studying as soon as possible.

Nicole Ximines -  
Freshman



Preparing for finals can be very stressful, but good grades at the end is my motivation, so constant studying day and night until my eyes bleed!

Jennifer Fiallos -  
Freshman



I am going to lock myself in my room with no form of communication. Good grades are a must!

Katie Lynam -  
Junior



I will be using review sheets to make study notes and memorizing them.

Erica Carrasquillo -  
Freshman



I will divide my notes into sections that coincide with my textbook and read one each day.



# Behind the Scenes with "Gypsy"

By Cassandra Guerrier

At a typical performance, whether it is a musical or a play, emphasis is generally placed on the cast and the environment surrounding them. However, if the audience were to look beyond the velvet curtains, they would come to understand the countless hours and effort that are put into not only the show, but all of the supplemental elements, as well.

In order to approach something so complex as set building, stage crew, and running crew, one must keep in mind the numerous responsibilities expected of each crewmember. According to stage crewmember Mallory Aroyo, building for the play commenced in the beginning of October. Members of the crew would meet every Sunday to work on different props, and figure out which

ones not only complemented the stage design, but also captured the essence of the play in general.

Additionally, the running crew, as well as the actors/actresses, were expected to attend rehearsals all week, which normally lasted until about 8:00 or 9:00 pm. Chapel Players newcomers Anna Marie Lettieri and Katherine Lopez spoke on the subject of what their experience during their first St. Joseph's College production was like. "There isn't a set amount of times," Anna Marie Lettieri stated, "that we rehearse a scene; we take as long as we need to make it perfect." Katherine Lopez added, "Sometimes you're sitting around for awhile until it is your turn to practice but overall, it is a fun experience."

I caught up with three more of the Chapel Players as they were awaiting rehearsal to begin. Diana Kessel, John Savarese, and Chris Townes offered insight on how they prepared for their roles. "I read the script a lot, and I do background

research. I don't do any method acting where you are the character and live like them," Diana stresses, "I just want to know who the person was. I love that this show is based on a real person."

On the other hand, John stated, "I try to remember times where I felt similar to how that character felt. I try to feel the same way and apply that feeling to the stage. Also, repetition helps me to memorize lines."

Lastly, Chris said that he also uses this method of repetition, and added, "I make my own cues for when I'm supposed to say my lines, and read other people's lines before me, so their line becomes my cue." After watching their performance, it was interesting to note how different their methods of preparation were from one another, yet they were all able to successfully execute their roles with such grace and precision.

Furthermore, I never realized how much of a

long, arduous process choreographing could be, until speaking with choreographer Jaime Vacca-Hoefner. When asked where she finds inspiration for choreography, Jaime replied, "My inspiration for choreography comes from the play itself. In musical theater, almost everything is given to you through the music, lyrics, book, etc. so it's my job to choreograph dances that are true to the story, character, and time period. It needs to be believable that the character would really move that way. So, I often have to do research on the time period that the play is taking place. For example, 'Gypsy' took place during the vaudeville era, so the movements have to do reflect the dance of that time."

There are a variety of elements that go into creating a production. While the end result is what is may be critiqued and appraised, it's the behind-the-scenes action that truly drives the story forward.

## Review: The Muppets

By Trey Norwood

The Muppets haven't had a theatrical release since "Muppets in Space" back in 1999. I don't remember much of anything from that movie, but I do remember not enjoying it. I loved the Muppets when I was a kid so when I heard that they were making a new movie I was both skeptical and excited. I was glad to see that the Muppets were coming back into the spotlight, but I was afraid that it would be some sort of quick cash grab like almost all movies based off of past properties have been for about the past five or six years. I'm glad to say I was extremely surprised by the quality of this film.

"The Muppets" revolves around Gary (played by Jason Segel who also wrote the film) and his younger brother Walter, a Muppet who doesn't seem to realize that he is a Muppet. The movie begins with Gary and Walter's childhood and how Gary would age but Walter would stay the same. Gary rents a tape for Walter one night that leads to their discovery of "The Muppet Show". Both Walter and Gary fall in love with the Muppets, Walter more so, and that love continues into their adult years.

One day Gary tells Walter that he is invited on the trip Gary planned with his girlfriend Mary (played by Amy Adams) and that he'll take him to see the Muppet studios. Once they get to the studios they see that it's clearly been abandoned for years and that the Muppets are no longer there. While Gary and Mary continue the tour, Walter sneaks into Kermit the Frog's old office where he learns the plot of an evil oil mogul who wants to tear down the studios to drill for oil. Walter, Gary, and Mary go to Kermit the Frog's mansion and tell him about the evil plot. From here on the story becomes one of getting the band back together and putting on a show to raise money.

What makes this movie great is the writing. The humor appeals to both kids and adults, and it's obvious that Jason Segel and co-writer Nicholas Stoller were huge Muppets fans when they were growing up and put a lot of effort in on the screenplay. Bret McKenzie (who plays Bret on "Flight of the Concorde") also did great job writing the songs in the movie. All fit perfectly into their scenes, especially Kermit's solo number "Pictures In My Head" and Jason Segel's duet with Walter, "Muppet or Man."

"The Muppets" was a very pleasant surprise, just like some of the cameos. Although not all of them worked, it was still nice to see that they were sticking with the old Muppets formula. If you're curious about seeing "The Muppets" or have considered seeing it than I strongly suggest that you do so. You and your friends will thoroughly enjoy it.

## Review: GYPSY

By Cassandra Guerrier

November 10th marked the opening night of the musical production "Gypsy: A Musical Fable", presented by the SJC Chapel Players. "Gypsy" is based on the memoirs of famous burlesque performer, Gypsy Rose Lee, and is the story of a stage mother who pushes her children against their wishes to perform in a vaudeville act. Directed by Tom Hoefner and performed in two acts, the production ran a little over three hours. Despite this, every eye remained glued on the stage as the comedic-drama unfolded.

Diana Kessel portrayed the crazed stage mother Rose, also known as 'Mama Rose'. Marking this as her final year as a Chapel Player, she certainly started off her legacy right with her performance in this role. I couldn't help but feel drawn towards her character, as she belted out classic tunes such as "Some People" and "Small World," and her rendition of "Everything's Coming Up Roses" was absolutely astounding. Being an alto powerhouse, her performance further proved that she is determined to go out with a bang.

Javier Bosque was a crowd favorite as the male lead, Herbie, there wasn't a moment where I was not entranced by his character. I could tell that he worked diligently on preparing for this role; he paid attention to every minute detail around him, while still managing to remain in character. Through his acting and singing, the audience was able to see him lay his soul bare - to manage such a feat is a true skill. From what I saw on stage, there could be no other contender for this role; Javier's acting ability was quite invigorating and well received.

Supporting actress Sabrina Corina gave a bone-chilling performance as Louise (Gypsy Rose Lee). Knowing a little about the background of the play, I was looking forward to her role and how she would interpret this character. After watching her, I was not disappointed. Her vocal range was extremely powerful; she was able to hit every single note without fluctuating. Her facial expressions were also very convincing; whenever she appeared on stage, the focus of the audience remained on her. We were all able to relate to her character because she presented her role with an extreme level of honesty.

In the role of one of the newsboys in the vaudeville act, Tulsa, it almost seemed as if John Savarese both physically and emotionally became the character. As he performed his solo with such conviction, his eyes were quite expressive, and his emotions were displayed so clearly, the audience fell for his character even when we shouldn't have. It is also worth noting that his strong vocals and dance skills were certainly a pleasant surprise. Veteran Chapel Players Aliza Hernandez and Tiffany DeRusso, and newcomer Anna Marie Lettieri, provided comic relief in their roles as vaudeville strippers, even though their performances were nothing to laugh about. Each girl was able to breathe life into their roles: Aliza with her seductive and booming voice, Tiffany DeRusso with her comedic endeavors, and Anna Marie with her gentle but strong character. Hearing and seeing them perform within the context of the play was a great experience; their harmonization was on point, and highly refreshing.

On another note, it was really exciting to see how the children were incorporated into the play. The addition of an orchestra, which consisted of violins, cellos, bass, a piano and drums, helped move the show along, and the comedic use of the song "Let Me Entertain You" was a nice touch. Lastly, after watching the play, it was obvious that all of the hard work put into those seemingly endless nights. Perfecting characters, creating the set design, managing costumes, doing make-up, and choreographing dance moves that must all correlate to the vaudeville time period, with little to no sleep, blended together, to create an awe-inducing story.



Photo Credit: Robert Napolitano

Rose (Diana Kessel) describes her latest dream to daughter Louise (Sabrina Corina).



Photo Credit: Robert Napolitano

Dainty June (Laura Lynne Duffy) dances with Caroline the Cow.



Photo Credit: Lynn Montoya

The "Gypsy" crew hard at work, putting together the set.



# Live From New York...

By Diana Kessel

In this fabulous city, some staples are so undeniably associated with New York. One of those is something I have been obsessed with since I was 12, the show Saturday Night Live. SNL was the first show that showed me what New York even was (Editor's note: Diana grew up in Minnesota. We know.) Since this age, I have entered the ticket lottery in an attempt to



win tickets. The lottery held in August is the only way to get confirmed tickets to the show. In early November, I got an email that confirmed my dream: I had won two tickets to be in the audience of a taping of SNL!

Diana Kessel

SNL tapes live (well, with a 5 second delay. Thanks Janet Jackson!)

on the ninth floor of Rockefeller Center in the heart of Midtown. I'd like to tell you that the audience is full of regular people, but this is not the case. As my "plus one" Mike Panico and I stood in line to be seated, we watched what was easily over 100 VIPs who were either NBC executives and their teenage girlfriends, or members of the host's entourage pass by us first. For the show, we were treated to seeing Jason Segel with musical guest Florence + the Machine.

First off, if you have ever seen the show on TV, it seems like a large studio with tons of seating. This is hardly the case! The studio is about the same size as the Tuohy Hall Auditorium. Two stages are built permanently, and those are the musical guest stage on the far left and the stage where the host performs their monologue (also the site of Weekend Update). The rest of the floor space is crammed with set pieces, movable stages, and actors all waiting until the last second to get into place. The seating that appears on the ground is all for VIPs. All remaining seats, about 200 all from Yankee Stadium, are set in a balcony. The extreme sides have a horrible view as they are blocked

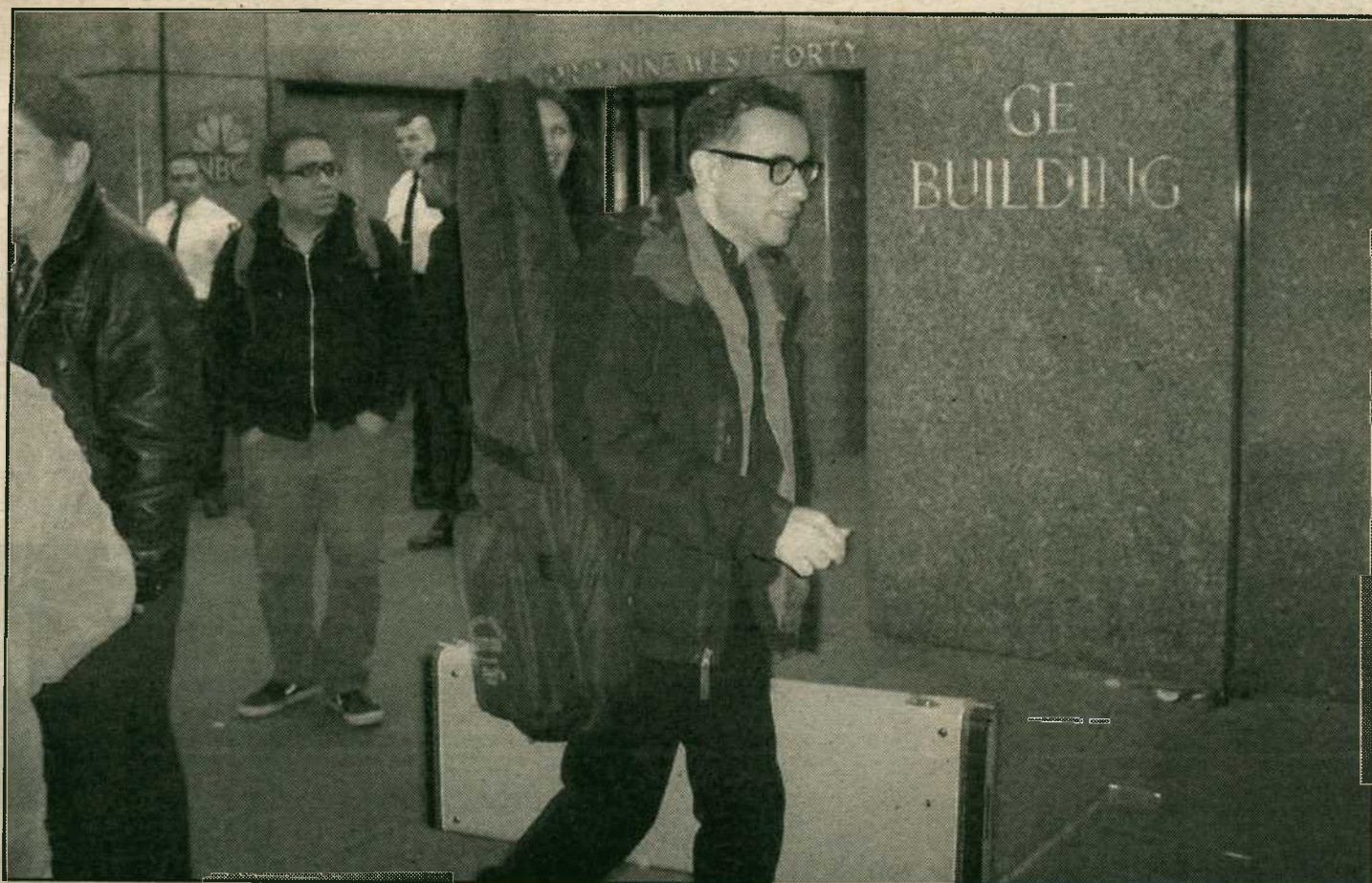


Photo Credit: Diana Kessel

SNL cast member Fred Armisen heads out for the cast party after the show's live broadcast.

by lights and equipment. Mike and I were in the last row, dead center, having a perfect view of the entire show.

Before the show started, cast member Jason Sudekis came onstage and explained the rules of being in the audience. NBC pages roamed the aisles constantly to check for anyone recording the show, which to me... seems pointless. Since we were all seated from above, we looked down at the sketches performed. I had to pinch myself in disbelief at seeing cast members I love and respect like Kristin Wiig, star of the summer comedy "Bridesmaids", or Andy Samberg, co-creator of the hilarious Digital Shorts, running around

changing costumes in only a few seconds.

One sketch centered on Kelly Ripa trying to find a replacement for Regis Philbin to be her new co-host on "Live with Regis and Kelly". The SNL performers played an array of celebrities, all a terrible fit for "Live". The actors stood in a line as the person they were impersonating and waited their turn to go on camera and do their bit. It was incredible to see them goofing off and laughing with each other just seconds before they would be on live television. The actors were constantly laughing and truly acting as a support system throughout the entire show. Actors would stand around watching the various sketches and laughing at

their friends. SNL has been home to performers with scandalous reputations, such as John Belushi and Chris Farley, so it was pretty insane thinking of the best comedians in the world gracing the stages and the legacy they have left on the city of New York.

Being in the audience of SNL was one of the most rewarding and special moments of my life. I encourage everyone to try the ticket lottery, because you never know what could happen. If you choose to wait on the day of the show for the stand-by line, be advised that some rich dude's girlfriend may undeservingly end up with your potential ticket.

## SJC Chorus: We Are the World

By Catherine Muldoon

Each year, the SJC Choral Society hosts a Fall and Spring Concert to highlight their work throughout the semester. As a member of the Choral Society for the past two years, I know the amount of work that goes into a concert. On Monday, December 12, it was extremely rewarding to see all of our hard work pay off at our fall concert titled "We Are the World."

We never begin a semester with a theme in mind; we simply try different songs and see what develops. We start off with a few pieces that Mary Gatchell, our director, likes and then she takes suggestions from the group of styles we would like to perform. Some songs that we liked early on are eliminated, while some songs are added only weeks before the show because they would be too perfect to be left out. That is the overall direction of the chorus; it has a very free-flow feeling to it. Mary never assigns solos until the week of

the show because she likes to give everyone the chance to try a solo. She often takes suggestions from members on different songs, and ways to sing them. The theme for this semester's concert came to us when we added a late additional song that we took from the Breads of the World event..."We are the World."

The week of the show is spent in the auditorium adjusting our voices to the acoustics of the room, and trying different stage set ups for different songs. Last year, we spent the concert in one line across the stage, but this year there was a different feeling to the chorus, so we needed a different set up. Since the women sang the majority of "Someone Like You" by Adele, the men sat on the front of the stage as the women sang over them. For Stevie Wonder's "Love is in Need of Love Today," we found that we needed to feel closer to the audience, so we all sat on the edge of the stage and locked eyes with someone we wanted to sing to. It can get very hot and daunting up there on stage with the heat of a thousand lights on you. You can't see the audience in the dark, and you can feel disconnected when you're trying to connect meaning to the songs you're singing. That is why it was so nice to have those moments of different stage set ups in the concert. It broke everything up and made it more comfortable for the chorus and the audience.

The audience's comfort was evident. They laughed and clapped along as the men

The theme for this semester's concert came to us when we added a late additional song that we took from the Breads of the World event..."We are the World."

danced to "All I Want for Christmas is You," while the women sang. They could barely stay in their seats during our rendition of "Joyful, Joyful" from Sister Act 2. They also gave their love and support to our three Senior solos, "Silent Night" by Lizzy Fiorella, "Santa Baby" by Teresa Bosque, and "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" by myself.

The greatest moment of the night for me was our last song. We sang Michael Jackson's "We Are the World," and for the last repeats of the chorus, we walked through the audience and sang to them. Some people looked surprised and a little shocked, but everyone embraced us as we sang our final notes to end the concert with our message that we can all change the world for the better. It was a feel-good concert and one of my favorites by far. I think we're going to have a hard time trying to find better songs and a better theme for next semester.



Photo Credit: Zuri Terrell

The SJC Chorus takes a break from practice to pose for a group photo.



# Smashburger

## A SJC Food-view

By Christa Sullivan

Some of you might recognize this name if you ever walk to Flatbush Avenue along Dekalb. It's the newest burger chain that has hit New York and has been steadily gaining popularity since. Smashburger originated in Colorado, but their first branch on the East Coast is about a 10 minute walk from campus. After walking past it for almost two months I had to try it, and I was glad that I did.

I walked into the place and my first impression of it was good. The place was immaculate, unlike your typical McDonald's or Burger King which are usually pretty dirty. The line went fast and I placed my order for a cheeseburger and sweet potato fries while my friend ordered a Spicy Baja burger and Smash Fries. They gave us a number and said they would bring the food to our table. You usually don't see that

happening at fast-food restaurants.

Our food came out in fewer than 10 minutes and I tried the burger first. It was exactly what you want from a classic cheeseburger: American cheese melted over the burger, tomato, lettuce, pickles and their special "Smash Sauce." It had the perfect amount of toppings and the burger itself was delicious. For \$4.99 I found no complaints, only praise. The sweet potato fries were good too, but the Smash Fries were a lot better. Drizzled with olive oil, covered with just enough rosemary and sprinkled with sea salt - I couldn't get enough of them. They were not fries you would expect from a fast food chain, but rather from a nice restaurant. I would order those again and again. My friend said his Spicy Baja burger was great too. His came with Pepper jack cheese, gua-

camole, jalapenos, lettuce, tomato and spicy chipotle mayo. It was a different take on the cheeseburger, but just as good and more appealing to people who love anything spicy.

The menu has a variety of other options too: from a "Brooklyn" burger to chili to using grilled chicken instead of beef, so there's something for everyone. I heard the shakes are really good, but I was too full to get one. I guess that means I'll just have to make another trip back.

From beginning to end, this place exceeded my expectations and might give Shake Shack and other burger chains a run for their money. Next time I'm in the mood for a burger, I'll be coming back here.



Photo Credit: Danielle Rothschild

Beyond these doors lie sweet burger goodness... or so the legends say.

# Book Review: Zone One

Author Colson Whitehead brings zombies right to our front doors.

By Gabrielle Hughes

On Wednesday, November 30th, SJC was lucky enough to have acclaimed writer, Colson Whitehead, present a guest lecture regarding his field of work. Whitehead's latest novel, "Zone One," was just released in October, and although he is primarily known for being a literary novelist, Whitehead demonstrates his ability to transition into the horror genre of book writing.

"Zone One" tells of a pandemic striking Earth, causing humanity to separate. For some time, the living has been pitted against the living dead, but as the plague of zombies begins to

diminish, civilization is able to realign. The book is divided into three consecutive days, and it is over the course of this period that the government is trying to re-stabilize Manhattan. "Zone One" refers to the region south of Canal Street, in which the story's protagonist, Mark Spitz, is working among the effort to manage the devastation.

Upon starting the novel, readers immediately gather a sense of Whitehead's familiarity with New York City. It seems as though every page incorporates recognizable characteristics of Manhattan, from descriptions

of residential buildings, to spot-on depictions of street dialogue. The book is flooded with names of local streets, landmarks and neighborhoods, defining "Zone One" as a centerpiece of modern New York City literature.

Whitehead's writing style stands out in this work, with rich, precise language present throughout its entirety. For example, his character descriptions, in this case, Mark Spitz, perfectly encapsulate who is being discussed, through clever and specific portrayals:

"His most appropriate designation would have been Most Likely Not to Be Named the Most Likely Anything, and this was not a category. His aptitude lay in the well-executed muddle, never shining, never flunking, but gathering himself for what it took to progress past life's next random obstacle."

The critical attention that "Zone One" has garnered is noticeably divided. While reviewers like Esquire magazine call it, "The best book of the fall," The New York Times fails to see direction in the story, declaring, "There isn't a plot." Whitehead is commended for poetic, imaginative prose, but it should be noted

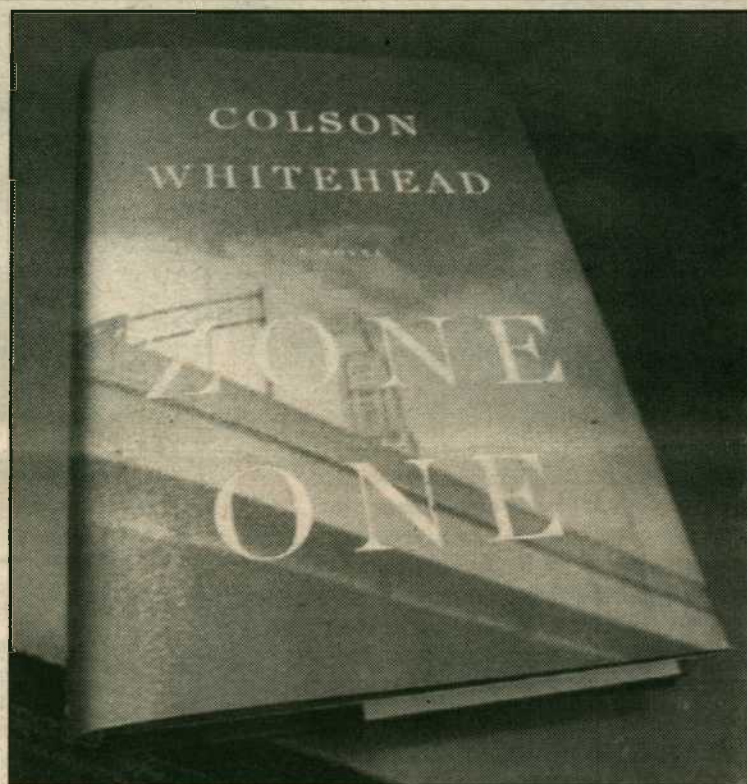


Photo Credit: Kayla Johnson

Zombies inside. Open at own risk.

that horror genre fans might be the harshest critics. Although the novel fluidly describes a post-apocalyptic New York, the action scenes are short, and the general presence of zombies is lacking.

Regardless, opinions of the novel will vary from reader to reader. Whitehead presents pages of image-filled, smooth, intelligent prose, which should

be reason enough to pick up the book. Grasping his references to New York City should offer enjoyment to SJC students, because as a local audience we can draw personal connections to the language he uses to convey various characteristics. In all, "Zone One" is a thoughtful, contemporary book, clearly reflecting all the attributes of Colson Whitehead's work.

## A Dancer's Storybook

By Diana Kessel



Photo Credit: Robert Napolitano

Telling tales through movement was the focal point of the Dance Club's latest performance.

On December 1st at Common Hour, The Dance Club presented their annual show. This year's theme was "Dancer's Storybook," showing the array of styles, originality, and talent that the Dance Club is known for. At the Common Hour show, the audience was treated to 11 pieces, ranging from Hip-Hop to swing, to Indian, and even Irish step dance. A screaming crowd welcomes all cultures and performers every semester, and the "Dancer's Storybook" show was no different.

Stand out performers included Tricia Gaya, a newcomer to the dance club who was featured in 4 numbers. Although Tricia just joined the club, she had an

undeniable presence on stage; it was hard to keep your eyes off her! Cassandra Guerrier, the club's vice president, was featured in multiple numbers, and seemed to lead the group without even trying.

Freshman Jam Marcos Evangelista is a truly exceptional male dancer, with many years of experience. He showcased his talents in the energetic and crowd-pleasing "Next to You," choreographed by Danielle Endes and club president Alyssa Fleischman. Jam was also featured in the opening Hip-Hop piece "Up All Night," by a returning favorite guest choreographer, Jeremy Lardieri. This particular number had the crowd screaming for the boys, all

hip-hopping their way to the front of the stage.

One of last year's favorite dancers and Class of 2011 graduate Lisa Murphy came back to choreograph "Paws Up," a megamix of Lady Gaga's biggest singles. The crowd's reaction and modern music video-style choreography shows how much music and dance makes an impact on both performers and audience members alike.

At times the stage was overflowing with dancers. This is a wonderful way to show how accepting the dance club is of all grades and talent levels. The show flowed seamlessly with great anticipation for the next performance. Lighting designer Kia Rogers found beautiful ways to illuminate the auditorium. Congratulations to the performers, choreographers, crew, and club director, Stacey Temple, on another wonderful dance club show. We all cannot wait to see what the spring brings!



# SOPA: War on Pirates or War on the Internet?

By Michael Panico

Whenever we hear the words "internet" and "restrictions" in the same sentence, everyone gets their "shorts in a bunch." So when SOPA (Stop Online Piracy Act) was introduced, everyone went crazy. "How dare you regulate the internet!" "How dare you prevent anyone from doing something on the Internet!" What people don't understand is that SOPA is not Internet censorship, at all.

Representative Lamar Smith of Texas first introduced SOPA. All this program does is expand the ability of law enforcement in the United States, along with copyright holders, to stop people from pirating their products. The Department of Justice would be able to get court orders against those sites that not only do it themselves, but also allow others to do it.

Frankly, all of these arguments against SOPA are baseless. Generally, I try not to put down the Left's arguments like that, but here, it's true. People that use PayPal would not be allowed to do business with websites. But, does SOPA actually require "regulation" of the Internet, like Yahoo, Google, Mozilla, and other big Internet companies claim? To be honest, I did not

know implementing something that forces people to follow the law was a regulation. In a world with piracy and plagiarism becoming such a problem, something has to be done. Yes, sites would have to then crack down, but it has to be done.

It's very similar to Ron Paul complaining about how we should stop the War on Drugs, just because everyone does drugs, and it's hard to actually carry out. So, because everyone is doing it, we do not take options in order to enforce the law? Yes,

sites like Tumblr would struggle because much of their content would either have to be copyrighted or cited, but piracy is illegal. All the government is trying to do is stop piracy, and prevent PayPal and Visa from doing business with pirates. There is a growing problem with pirated goods, and we cannot allow it to continue. There needs to be a system in which we are not promoting illegal activity. It's like the music pirating phenomenon; just because everyone does it, and it is insanely inexpensive for us to use, doesn't mean it's not against the law.

The only way to prevent the pirating of goods is to either offer incentives for websites that voluntarily will turn illegal websites in, or make it easier to get warrants to take these websites and webmasters down. This bill, while not perfect, does both. Can the language of the bill be improved? Yes, but until someone comes up with a better, more concrete way of doing this, we'll have to deal with this bill. We should not be allowing illegal activity on the Internet just because it's "hard to patrol," or because "everyone is doing it." It is not taking away free speech. There is a difference between taking away free speech and taking down websites that break the law.



Photo Credit: Spirit Staff

If SOPA is passed, will it lead to sites like Google having to severely curtail the content they offer?

## The Lessons of Penn State

By Ashley Carrillo

We stand by and do nothing while others get hurt. We see it at home, in school, at work, in the subway, and on TV. We all have witnessed someone getting hurt on various levels. But what have we done to stop it? We would like to think that we always stand up against the offender and do what's right. But all too often, good people stand by at the expense of others. Our human nature tells us that if we didn't directly participate, then it isn't our fault.

In recent news, the public's eye has been on Penn State and their decision regarding head football coach, Joe Paterno. While the source of the problem was Jerry Sandusky, former defensive coach of the Nittany Lions football team and recently indicted by a grand jury on a number of charges related to the sexual abuse of minors, Paterno was included in the bundle of firings.

What has been overlooked is that when he accepted his position at Penn State, Paterno accepted more than just the title of head coach. In that moment he became a leader and a role

model. So when he came upon the information of Sandusky's potential misconduct (as it was presented to him by a graduate assistant almost a decade ago), his responsibility was to protect anyone who might have been in harm's way. He did report it to the college's athletic director, but he should have gone to the police. Especially after he saw that Sandusky was allowed to proceed with his involvement with students. Of course in hindsight, Paterno realizes he should have taken that step. When he neglected to handle the problem like the leader he was esteemed to be, he lost the trust of football players, students, and parents nationwide.

Paterno, like too many of us, chose not to take the difficult step of standing up for what was right. I whole-heartedly respect Penn State's decision to fire him. It is a painful reminder to the world that if you don't do anything to stop evil, then you are at fault for the harm done to others. Unfortunately, Paterno's career and Penn State's football program are the price to be paid. If this isn't a lesson learned for every student and teacher at Penn State and schools across the country, I don't know what is.

## Venezuela: Safe At Home?

By Nerisa Bethel

When most people return to their homeland, they expect to be embraced and surrounded by love. Wilson Ramos of the Washington Nationals baseball team received just the opposite when he returned to his native Venezuela to play for the country's home team the Aragua Tigers during his offseason. The 24-year old baseball player was seized at gunpoint in front of his parents' home in the city of Valencia. Thankfully, Ramos was recovered safely, and six men, a 59-year old woman, and a 74-year old man have all been jailed in connection with the kidnapping. The six men are accused of directly participating in the abduction while the older man and woman are charged as accomplices for providing the group with food.

Wilson Ramos was returning home to show his appreciation, and his own people robbed him of that. Ramos reports how the abduc-

tors laughed and grinned at his pain and told him that they were expecting a large ransom. They did not hurt him physically, but psychologically. Their main objective was to get money. The fact that more experienced and mature adults were involved in this crime says something about the state of the country.

Venezuela's overall per capita murder rate is cited as one of the top five in the world. A National Counter Kidnapping Commission was actually created in Venezuela in 2006. Since then, there have been alarming increases in kidnappings throughout the country. Kidnappings in 2009 increased anywhere from 40-60% from the previous year. Armed robberies take place throughout the city, including places generally presumed safe and frequented by tourists. Kidnappings are so common in this country that they can be placed into categories like "express kidnappings" or "virtual kidnappings" according to

## Creating Jobs With Starbucks

By Jessica Jacolbe

The next time you walk in to Starbucks to get coffee, you are not only walking into a coffee shop, but a place giving you the opportunity to help your country. One of the biggest problems echoing across America today is unemployment. CEO of Starbucks, Howard Schultz, realizes this, and decided to take action by launching the "Create Jobs for USA" program just this past month.

Starbucks has joined forces with the Opportunity Finance Network to help create jobs across America. Grants from the project will be given to certain Community Development Financial Institutions. These CDFIs provide loans to small businesses, nonprofit organizations, and microenterprises, which are the basis of providing jobs to many Americans. 100 percent of the donations given to Starbucks' new project are given to this cause.

As an incentive, anyone who donates with a minimum of \$5 will receive a red, white, and blue wristband with the word "Indivisible" inscribed. They are available at all Starbucks stores or online at CreateJobsforUSA.org.

Starbucks has not only become a place that serves coffee, but a safe haven for the busy worker or student to relax and enjoy some personal time. Howard Schultz has changed the way people think of coffee shops, and now he has further expanded the Starbucks brand into one that gives back to the American people, not only in coffee.

What the country needs right now is jobs, and you can help this cause. America is suffering a 9.1% unemployment rate, and you may be part of the percentage of Americans desperately

looking for a job.

Howard Schultz realizes that this project alone will not bring prosperity back to the job market, but he hopes that it inspires and launches many other job-creating projects across the country. As college students getting ready for an erratic job market, we may all learn something from the CEO of Starbucks. He says that if you can't wait for Washington to make the changes, then you must make the change yourself. You can do your part and follow in his footsteps by creating jobs, as well.



Photo Credit: Danielle Rothschild

A Starbucks employee models the "Indivisible" bracelet.

the U.S. Department of State.

Discussion about the crime in Venezuela can be endless, especially when news about kidnapping a famous baseball player is televised, but there are constructive, cultural movements occurring there as well. El Sistema is a government program in Venezuela inspired by music. The National System of Youth and Children's Orchestras of Venezuela was created to help children and young people achieve their full potential and acquire values that favor their growth and have a positive impact on their lives. Once a child makes it into the orchestra, he/she receives a stipend to continue doing what they

love and their parents do not have to work to keep them in the program. The orchestra has received prestigious awards from all over the world from the 1990's to this year -- 2011. Italy recognizes the magic of the program, and so does Germany, Austria, Vienna, and countless other countries. El Sistema is more than a promising program. It is a movement -- "to play and to fight" (Simon Bolivar Foundation). Playing their instruments assiduously will eventually help the children's dreams come true. The power behind a program like this can defeat crime any day. However, as long as crime continues, movements like this one will be left in the dark.





Photo Credit: Rachel Maldonado

The Dark Knight prepares to descend upon the evildoers of Gotham in this stage from "Batman: Arkham City."

## Game Review - Batman: Arkham City

By Rachel Maldonado

On October 18th of 2011, Rocksteady Studios released the highly anticipated video game "Batman: Arkham City", the sequel to the highly praised "Batman: Arkham Asylum." The storyline of the game takes place one year after the first game, with Arkham Asylum destroyed. Batman is trapped in Arkham City, which has now become a super-prison much larger than Arkham Asylum. With the help of Alfred and the Oracle, Barbara Gordon, Batman must stop the chaos in the prison that's caused

by Doctor Strange and the fatally ill Joker.

This game not only received hype for its storyline, but for the production and hard work put into it. Both video games were scripted by Paul Dini, a comic book writer who has written for DC Comics. One of the biggest reasons for the hype towards this sequel is Mark Hamil's statement about this video game being the last time he'll be voicing the Joker.

The experience of playing Batman has really helped the video game's reputation. The setting created for the game feels limitless to the gamer. The game world is huge, giving gamers the freedom to climb up roof tops, run through alleyways, and play side missions. Aside from

playing the main story mode, the gamer can play subplots, such as the Calendar Man's missions, which require the gamer to play on actual holidays. The gamer can also play Zsaz's telephone game which has the gamer running all over the super-prison to answer his telephone calls before a hostage is killed. The gamer can also stop by on one of the rooftops and meet the mystery man who leaves a symbol for the player to decode.

Aside from the side missions, the gamer can also download other characters from the "Batman" family to play as, such as Robin, Nightwing, and best of all, Catwoman. Catwoman has her own storyline which inter-

twines with Batman's storyline at one point. She takes advantage of the chaos in Arkham City in order to steal back what Doctor Strange has stolen from her. For this mission, she teams up with bat-villain Poison Ivy.

This game was made with the intention of letting the gamer feel like Batman. Each mission and side mission is exciting while requiring thought from the gamer. It introduces new characters and reacquaints gamers with old characters. It's a great game for Batman fans and for those just interested in great gameplay.

## There's an App for That: Social Media as a Business Tool

By Tony Wu

The Internet is arguably one of the most important parts of life. With the development of sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Google Plus, most people see that using social media appropriately can help better their business. Corporations try to build on their social networking, via Facebook or Twitter, to increase communication with their consumers, and get a higher attention rate. At the same time, people like to notice businesses they love on websites, and get the latest news and special offers.

Here are two different social media platforms:

### 1. Facebook Page/Google Plus Page

There are so many similar things between Facebook and Google Plus. Google Inc. borrowed ideas from Facebook to provide business

users with the ability to build their own pages in Google Plus, which is a totally new form of social media. These two network platforms allow small business owners create their own circle or group to communicate with their consumers, and raise their popularity.

### 2. Twitter

Twitter is an online social networking and micro blogging service that enables its users to send and read text-based posts of up to 140 characters, informally known as "tweets".

Twitter provides three ways to promote business:

- **Promoted Trends:** Your business can be put in the top of the Trends, and then it will let more people talk about it, expanding the influence of brand.

- **Promoted Account:** These special accounts can let people to know your business directly and clearly.

- **Promoted Tweets:** These tweets usually appear in the search results of people's timelines. In 2010, Twitter released this product, which is like Google Ad, as it uses the "key words" to show the advertisements to public.

Some points you need to know: Before you start to use social media to develop your business, you need to think about your goals, like raising popularity, expanding your amount of the consumers, etc.

**Visibility:** After you build a page or circle on social media, you want to have more and more people "Like" your page (the button in Facebook which means you notice this page.) Only after you have enough followers can you create events or post advertisements to your consumers.

**Pace:** The biggest advantage of Internet is speed. You should use this to let your followers

get the latest news as soon as possible.

**Common Interests:** After you get enough followers, you should find out what people like to get from your page: information, discounts, or events. You should avoid being a spammer, who usually posts many things followers don't like.

After you decide to use social media to develop your business, you can view some of the best business pages. These businesses have great teams to run their pages, allowing them to easily increase their fan count.

Social media for business is a big project, as it is related to the modern financial wellbeing of businesses. As businesses increase their use of social media, I hope that I can share more things about this topic with you in the future.



# NBA Lockout: What You Need To Know

By Marco Fuentes

Fans always ignore the business behind professional sports because, quite frankly, it is complicated and boring. But without the business aspect, professional sports would not exist. This was seen with the NBA this summer.

NBA players, like any other professional players, are members of a Union, or player's association. As members of a Union, they have the right to a collective bargaining agreement with the owners, regarding revenues, salaries, benefits, free agency, etc. The previous collective bargaining agreement expired this summer, and players then decided they wanted more money. Among other things, they asked for a 50/50 revenue split, but the owners were completely against giving the players more money. The players and the owners had an allotted time to come to a fair deal and prevent a lockout. However, both sides were very far apart and a deal was never reached. As a result, the owners locked out the players, meaning the players could not use team facilities, talk to coaches, or have any contact with NBA teams.

When the lockout started on July 1st, both sides came together to discuss a deal, but no progress was made. The players proposed the 50/50 revenue split, and the owners immediately rejected it. Days after, the owners proposed the players a deal that included the 50/50 revenue split, but the players felt it took away some of their free agency rights, so this prompted them to reject the proposal as well.

The season is supposed to be well under way by now. Weeks of the NBA season have already been canceled, producing the loss of millions of dollars for both the



Photo Credit: Kayla Johnson

With the NBA lockout having been resolved, the Knicks will be playing at the Garden by Christmas.

owners and the players. When no progress was being made, the Union chose to dissolve, filing an anti-trust lawsuit against the owners condemning the lockout as illegal. Before the court started the litigation process, both the players and the owners met a few times without success before finally coming to handshake deal.

The details of the agreement have not been fully released yet, but both sides agreed on a fair

deal. In order to get the already shortened NBA season under way, the union has to re-form for it to be eligible to vote on the deal. First, both parties have to approve the deal. The NBA needs 15 out of the 29 owners to vote for the agreement and the union needs a simple majority of its 430 plus members in order to make the new collective bargain agreement official.

With this new tentative agree-

ment the players and the owners will put an end to the 149-day lockout that at one point jeopardized the entire NBA season. The league plans to begin the shortened season on Christmas Day by offering a triple-header: the Boston Celtics at the New York Knicks, followed by Miami at Dallas, and then Derrick Rose and Chicago against Kobe Bryant and the Lakers. The league plans a 66-game season and only 16 games,

per team, will be missed.

Finally, NBA fans and sports fans in general can look forward to having a basketball season. People are tired of hearing about how the owners and the players are arguing about money and not basketball. However, they are more than ready to talk about how their favorite player scored 30 points on their rival team, or whether LeBron James will ever win a championship.

## Top Gear: The New FIAT 500

By Robert Jurman

This is the new Fiat 500 and it's marking Fiat's return to the United States after a 27 year leave of absence. But one thing is certain: the company is determined to make up for lost time.

This car may be small, it may remind you of a Mini Cooper, a Smart Car or for that matter Inspector Clouseau, but to me it isn't like any of these things. To me, it's style. To me, it's class. Which means that a Fiat is no longer a car simply made for a member of the Italian Communist Party; now it's become a car for normal people, a car for Americans, a car that you can drive to an A-list show, party or restaurant in Manhattan. It can go from simply taking a trip to the supermarket to buy groceries, to

"You may think that looking like an Italian movie star will set you back a movie star's salary, but in fact the base Fiat only costs \$15,500."

going to the Grammy's in Hollywood. In this car you might just feel like a famous Italian Actor or Actress named 'Giovanni' or 'Vincenza'.

You may think that looking like an Italian movie star will set you back a movie star's salary, but in fact the base Fiat only costs \$15,500 and to get the top Fiat it will cost you \$27,500 dollars and that's a good range for cars. But you

won't be paying a whole lot in gas either, since the Fiat's fuel economy is very good. It does 37 MPG in the City and 56 MPG on the Highway. Comparing this to the Mini Cooper who only does 32 MPG in the City and 37 MPG on the Highway, the Fiat is a steal and the features offered on just the base model are good, great even. On the base Fiat 500 you get a 5-Speed Manual Gear Box or an Automatic Gear Box, heated mirrors, AM/FM radio with a CD player and iPod Dock, hands free mobile device and a Bose Sound System.

If you want to get fancy with the sport or luxury packages you can get heated front seats, Tom Tom Sat Nav and even a power sunroof. However, there is a drawback: the Fiat has a 1.4 liter turbocharged engine with



Photo Credit: Robert Jurman

Wrapped up with a big bow, the FIAT 500 is ready and waiting to ride America's highways this holiday season.

135 horsepower and goes 0 to 60 in 7.9 seconds with a top speed of 112 MPH and for a little car, that's pretty good. But, the Mini is faster. The Mini Cooper has a 1.6 liter turbocharged engine with 177 horsepower and goes 0 to 60 in 6.2 seconds with a top speed of 147 MPH. But (and I can't believe I'm saying this) I don't care one bit. I don't care that this plastic bathtub you call a

Mini Cooper is faster than a Fiat, because buying a Fiat for speed is like going to see a Megan Fox movie for the storyline. Besides, where in the city can you go at 147 MPH?

Yes, a Mini Cooper may be refined and clean, it may be fast, but it's like the brain or a textbook and that means it's only a cold shell. However, this new Fiat 500... that's the heart and soul.



# The Spirit

## Special Holiday Insert

Holiday Special

The Spirit/December 2011

Page H1

# From the Desk of the President

By Catherine Muldoon

On November 30th, SGA and C.A.B. held their annual Tree Lighting Ceremony with the Dillon Center Children. Everything was in place; the tree had been decorated white and silver to go with our Winter Wonderland theme, the Student Life Stockings were hung, and hot chocolate and cookies were ordered. We prepare for this just like any other, but this was no ordinary event.

Swarms of Dillon Center Children flood the hallway in Tuohy for the lighting each year, and these children are nothing like college students. As a business major I never actually go in the Dillon Center, and I have very little interaction with these children, except when I'm trying not to get run over by them on the mall! However, there were little ones everywhere at the tree lighting, and to be honest it was a little intimidating. If a college student is bored at an event, they will most likely keep it to themselves, but if a child is bored they often let you know. Suddenly, I couldn't remember how to sing Christmas carols, and I became extremely nervous about reading a Christmas story to the children.

The program started with SGA and C.A.B. leading everyone in a

few Christmas Carols. All the adults and St. Joseph's students were singing, but the children were not. I don't think it was because they didn't know the words; more like they had no idea what was going on. Then I told them we had a special guest with us to help us celebrate; could they guess who it was? To their surprise, Mickey Mouse came out of the Student Life office to help read the story (Mickey's Night Before Christmas), and light the tree.

The interesting thing about children is that they are so unpredictable. As I was reading to them, they wouldn't be afraid to shout out their thoughts and observations. They were so excited to point out Santa Claus every time he was on the page. It made me realize that you can't plan for everything in life; life is unpredictable. I couldn't stop reading the story to make room for their interjections; I had to keep going. In the same way, we can't let life stop when something interrupts us; we have to welcome it and continue moving forward.

I have realized that children are not as intimidating as I once thought. They say what they want, and their observations are usually interesting. They remind us to slow down when life gets too fast and chaotic, and take the time to appreciate the small things that make life really interesting.



Photo Credit: Robert Napolitano

SGA President Catherine Muldoon reads a Christmas story to the children from the Dillon Center... and a giant, talking mouse.

## A Spectacular "Spectacular" at Radio City

By Nerisa Bethel

This year's "Radio City Christmas Spectacular" truly was a Christmas spectacular, a show to rival all shows. The performance could amaze even the oldest, most jaded New Yorker. It was a well-balanced portrayal of the Christmas season including both fantasies as well as religious beliefs. The Rockettes truly outdid themselves and the orchestra could not have been any better.

The opening scene of the show was Santa on his sleigh with all of his reindeer. Of course, all of his reindeer were Rockettes. The Rockettes were decked out in brown body suits with red and green Christmas designs. When they all danced in unison, they literally looked the big, brown animals with antlers. Then they began tapping. They tapped and tapped and every time they did, they struck something in each of

the audience members because the sound seemed to echo through the entire hall.

The show used a great deal of illusions to attract younger children. In one scene, there was a NYC Sightseeing tour bus. The moving street images in the background gave the illusion that the bus was traveling along the streets of New York City.

When the nutcrackers took the stage, however, that's when everyone's mouth dropped. The Rockettes were all dressed in white suits with black hats so they already looked uniformed. They formed perfectly symmetrical shapes and lines and moved with the utmost accuracy. I remember one specific part of their performance when they formed a star; I was in awe. They were perfectly aligned and it was just beautiful. The nutcrackers did not just exit the stage. They were "deflated" and went right back into their toy house. The audience watched as each

nutcracker leaned into the other until they all looked like a giant white piece of paper; then they were gone.

Actors told the story of the Christmas spirit by reminding the audience that moms did not need to stress about looking for the ideal gift for their kids. Instead, they needed to spend time with them and appreciate being with one another during the most beautiful time of the year.

Animals like donkeys and camels closed the show in a depiction of the Christian story of the birth of baby Jesus. The stage was dark to represent night time, and that one gold star in the sky shined over the manger where baby Jesus, Joseph, and Mary stood over him. To fully complete the emotional moment, the orchestra played the song, "Christ the Savior is Born." Then the curtains closed on a truly spectacular show.



Photo Credit: Kayla Johnson

New York's historic Radio City Music Hall, longtime home of the "Christmas Spectacular" as well as the Rockettes.





Photo Credit: Robert Jurman

## The Spirit Picks: The Top 10 Christmas Movies of All-Time

By Catherine Muldoon and the Spirit Staff

The following list has been voted on by "The Spirit" staff as the top 10 holiday movies of all time. We hope you enjoy them!

10) "The Muppet Christmas Carol" (1992) Kermit and his gang of Muppets put a clever twist on the Charles Dickens' classic. It is a comedic remake with contemporary songs and humor, but it follows the original story closely. It was the fourth in a series of live-action musical feature films featuring the Muppets, and the first produced after creator Jim Henson's death. It tells a timeless tale with the fun and creative Muppet style.

9) "Miracle on 34th Street" (1947) This Christmas film takes place in New York City after the Thanksgiving Parade, as people wonder whether the department store Santa might be the real thing. It is a heartfelt story that teaches people to open their imaginations during this holiday season and just believe in the possibilities of magic.

8) "It's A Wonderful Life" (1946) In this film, George Bailey discovers that life is a precious gift, and with the help of a Guardian Angel named Clarence, he sees all of the lives he has changed and inspired with just his presence. It is an inspirational film, as it teaches audiences that everyone makes a difference no matter how small it might be.

7) "The Nightmare Before Christmas" (1993) Is it a Halloween movie or a Christmas movie? Well, it was released on October 29, but it has all the makings of a Christmas story. Jack Skellington becomes bored with the monotony of Halloween and he journeys through a portal to "Christmas Town." He takes the role of Santa Clause and causes unintentional chaos in the town. He realizes he belongs in "Halloween Town" scaring people, but first he makes amends with Santa, and he is able to bring a little Christmas spirit into Halloween in this oddly fascinating Tim Burton-produced movie.

6) "A Christmas Story" (1983) You know this is a Christmas classic when it is shown 24 hours straight on Christmas Day. This hilarious Christmas comedy makes you laugh till you cry as all Ralphie asks for is a Red Ryder BB Gun, but everyone tells him, "You'll shoot your eye out!" It is one of those movies you watch on Christmas every year with the whole family after dinner, and that is why it is number 6 on the list.

5) "Love Actually" (2003) This British romantic comedy depicts the development of love during the Christmas season through ten separate story lines. It does not follow the pattern of all the classic Christmas movies; this feel-good film could even be a Valentine's Day chick flick if it wasn't set at Christmas.

4) "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" (2000) This comedy based on the Dr. Seuss book tells the story of a Grinch who hates Christmas. In his attempt to stop the holiday from happening, he discovers that he has a heart and he cares about Christmas. Jim Carrey adds his eccentric personality to the Grinch's character to make this comedy an instant classic.

3) "Elf" (2003) Will Ferrell presents the PG version of himself as Buddy the Elf, a human raised as an elf at the North Pole who returns to New York City as an adult to find his family. His over the top innocence and ignorance of anything but Christmas leads to a situation of perfect comedy for everyone else. It is a movie with humor that kids and adults can enjoy, and it ranks number 3 on our list this year.

2) "The Polar Express" (2004) This Christmas film is based on the children's book of the same title by Chris Van Allsburg. The story shows audiences that they need to embrace their imagination and believe in the impossible. Children have the ability to trust their imagination and believe in the most remarkable things, while adults shut out the magic of Christmas.

1) "Home Alone" (1990) This movie needs no explanation; it is clearly the best holiday movie of all time. There is something completely hilarious and empowering about a kid being able to protect his house from theft and humiliate adults in the process, all while celebrating the togetherness of family that makes up the true spirit of Christmas. It is a creative masterpiece, and everyone wishes they were as clever as Kevin McCallister. It definitely earns its place as number 1 on our list of Top 10 Holiday Movies.

## Keeping Christ in "Christ"mas Movies

By Michael Panico

"If we don't tell the true meaning of Christmas, who will?" - Charles Schulz, creator of "Peanuts"

The Christmas season: a time of crazy shoppers, constant Christmas music, and the wonderful showing of "holiday" specials on ABC Family and other networks. As we at The Spirit were trying to come up with the "Top 10 Holiday Movies," a question was posed: What about movies that actually involved the birth of Jesus?

The thing is, can anyone actually name one? The only one that even comes close is "The Nativity Story," a 2006 film that no one has even heard of. Instead, we automatically think of something like "The Santa Clause," "Polar Express," or even "Home Alone."

Why is that? Well, the quote above, from Charles Schulz, is in reference to his special, "A Charlie Brown Christmas." Many avid Charlie Brown fans may remember the scene when Linus recites the story of Jesus' birth from Luke's

Gospel. It's the watershed moment in the special in the struggle between the commercialization of Christmas and the anti-commercialization of Christmas. Everyone hates how Christmas has become about material goods, and they want it to sway the other way, but not so much that we actually think and talk about what Christmas is all about: the birth of Jesus. If we cannot have a focus on material goods at Christmas, but we cannot focus even on religion as we are then seen as a bunch of Jesus-freaks who hate certain groups of people (even though that isn't the case), then what do we do?

All I am saying is to pick one: Either have commercialization, with a focus on the business side of Christmas, or focus on the TRUE meaning of Christmas. As Linus says: "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and goodwill towards men'... And that's what Christmas is all about, Charlie Brown."

## Holiday Deals & Steals: For Her

By Kristen McMaster

It's that time of year again when stores pull out all their tricks to make you spend money. Instead of getting trampled in the Black Friday mobs, here are a few tips for buying the women in your life that perfect gift without breaking the bank.

Stores are almost ALWAYS having some sort of sale, but how do you know you are really getting a deal? "Holiday" discounts can sound amazing, but they probably aren't the best. If you are truly looking to save, my advice is to shop online. Whenever you use the Internet to shop, you automatically have a higher chance of finding EXACTLY what you are looking for, at the lowest price possible.

Anytime you shop online, always looks for online coupons. Just Google the online store, and tack on the word "coupons." Websites like Groupon.com are known for their great discounts, boasting up to 90% off from popular local businesses. They base the "deal of the day" on where you live, and deals don't end at material items. You can get Groupons for restaurants, massages, and even vacations! Groupon also makes life easier by eliminating the printing of coupons. You can bring the Groupon right up on your phone and just show the cashier. What could be simpler than that?

If you aren't looking for just a "deal of the day," then I would suggest Ebates.com. This website basically gives you money back for shopping online! Ebates pays their members cash back every time they shop online, while providing some of the best online coupons and deals. So far, Ebates has paid over \$85,000,000 in cash to its members. If I were you, I would stop reading, put this paper down, and come back after you've signed up. Also, it's worth mentioning that that sign up for Groupon and Ebates are COMPLETELY FREE!

One of the best websites for holiday shopping is Amazon.com. You are almost guaranteed to find the product you are looking for, marked down even slightly because of the magnitude of sellers. The best part about Amazon is that they have "Amazon Student." This feature allows verified college students to receive special benefits, including special student promotions and discounts, and six months of FREE Two-Day Shipping with Amazon Prime.

While all these websites will definitely help you keep your holiday shopping budget in check, I bet you're wondering how you are going to get that one designer item on your list for less. My secret weapon for obtaining affordable designer trends is HauteLook.com. It is an online store that features up to 20 different designer brands every day, having sales up to 90% off on all of their items! They have shoes, jewelry, makeup, clothing, and vacations all in one place, all from famous designers, and all at DISCOUNTED prices. None of the items are knock-offs, and speaking from experience, they all prove to have amazing quality. Brands such as L.A.M.B., Philosophy, Steve Madden, Tahari, Juicy Couture, and MANY more all have sales on this website. Whether she wants that latest purse, or a rare diamond, you can bet it will be on this website for way less. If you are looking for even more of a variety, you can check out Ideeli.com and beyondtherack.com. Both of these websites essentially work just like HauteLook, and give you even more designer options!

So when you are shopping for all the women in your life this holiday season, you know that saving money is just a click away, and you don't have to even leave your house! Shopping on a budget almost sounds like fun after you visit all of these amazing sites, and let's face it, with all the money you've saved, I'm sure there will be some extra money to get yourself a little something. Happy shopping!

## Holiday Deals & Steals: For Him

By Tyrell Paul

It's that time of year again, when people spend tons of money on gifts for friends and family members. Each year, millions of dollars are spent on presents, some which are very expensive. Let's say that an unemployed college student wants to buy his father, or someone close to him, a gift for Christmas. What are some affordable gifts that a college student could buy for Christmas?

One idea for purchase is a nice shirt. Stores like Marshall's, Macy's, Burlington Coat Factory, TJ Maxx, Sears, and Dr. Jay's offer nice shirts for twenty dollars or less. Since it is winter, people could also use scarfs, hats and gloves, and these things cost less than twenty dollars as well.

Along with getting new clothing, people love to eat chocolate. There are different types of chocolates out there that are very good, but still inexpensive; in some places you can pick up a box a chocolate for \$10 or less. You could even buy chocolate for ninety-nine cents. In some department stores like Macy's and Marshall's, they have mini Godiva chocolate and others candies for two dollars and change. People love Godiva chocolate, and you could never go wrong with buying that for someone.

Many people today have iPods and other electronics, especially children and teenagers. If you are buying a teenager a gift, you can buy an iTunes gift card for 15 bucks, or maybe \$25, if you have a little extra to spend. You can also buy an iPod, or a cell phone case from many places, including Amazon and Ebay, for a very small price. It is worth noting that affordable cases can also be found for purchase on the street.

If you are buying your little brother a gift, there are many toys such as action figures and dolls that cost at least \$20 or in some cases less. You can buy him GI Joe action figures or a Homer Simpson doll. Videogames can even be very affordable. You can go to places like Game Stop and get a Tekken fighting game for \$10, as oppose to going to Toys R Us and paying over \$50 for a Mortal Kombat game. Game boards are another affordable gift to give to someone for Christmas. You can get them brand new for around \$20.

You can never go wrong with a gift card these days. You can get a gift card for any amount of money, depending on what your budget allows. You could also buy gift cards for restaurants, and movie gift cards are also a great option.

Another Christmas gift that would be good to give to a little boy, especially one who comes from a poor background, is school supplies. There are many families who truly cannot afford to pay for these things. Many disadvantaged children value education very much, and they would prefer to receive school supplies as a gift more than anything else. Even middle class students would love to receive a free notebook or pencils as gifts. Matter of fact, you don't even have to buy the actually supplies. You could get a \$20 gift card from Staples and let the child buy whatever he wants.

If you have a brother who likes to watch movies all the time, here's another perfect idea: DVDs. Target has so many under \$20 dollars, and the variety of films available is endless. Movies are a great option, because you can cater to the specific wants of the person you are buying the gift for.

If you did not go Christmas shopping yet, hopefully these ideas will be helpful, and at the end of the day you won't be broke. Take it from me, a person who likes taking short cuts when it comes to money. You don't even have to buy someone a gift. The perfect gift to give someone is love. Love goes a very long way.



# What Are YOU Eating This Season?

By Christa Sullivan

Typically, what everyone eats for the holiday depends upon the customs and traditions they have been brought up with, and how their family celebrates. Italians eat their seven fish dinner on Christmas Eve, Spanish have their pork, on Hanukkah, those of the Jewish faith enjoy latkes (fried potato pancakes) and loukoumades (fried dough, similar to a zeppole and dipped in honey). On Kwanzaa peanut soup, okra and greens, and yams are time-honored dishes, and then there are plenty of people that make festive desserts commemorating a certain feast. Types of food vary across the board, but no matter what nationality or religion you are, and what traditions you have, everyone looks forward to the holiday season. I've asked a few people what dish they're looking forward to the most this year and this is what they've said:

- Jillian Cianflone looks forward to her

special Christmas chocolate mousse cake.

- Victoria Duarte enjoys fried shrimp, calamari, and stuffed mushrooms on Christmas Eve.

- Jonathan Klug says that he's excited for baked clams with just a little lemon to top it all off.

- Erin Watters waits for her mom's cookies during this time of year.

- Menelik Joseph wants barbecue ribs... or anything involving pork.

- Cassandra Guerrier doesn't care about any particular food, but wants her eggnog with cinnamon.

- Madeline DiNapoli loves all the Christmas appetizers such as sundried

tomato dip and a special zucchini dish, as well as traditional yeast buns which are made only on St. Lucy's Day.

For me, it's all about the Christmas cookies. Throughout the entire month of December my mom bakes anywhere between 8-12 varieties of cookies. I'm not kidding. We have everything from rainbow cookies (a.k.a. seven layer cookies, my personal favorite), to pinwheels (a sugar cookie swirled with raspberry jam) to rugelach (a rolled cookie containing cinnamon sugar, walnuts and raisins) to cream cheese puffs (they don't taste anything like cream cheese). Baking cookies has been a tradition in my family longer than I can recall, and will remain a tradition when I get older. Some people look forward to their fish, pasta, pork, etc., but for me nothing beats Christmas dessert, especially the cookies!



Photo Credit: Robert Napolitano

Sugar and gingerbread cookies are just a small sample of the culinary staples this time of year.

# What Gifts Are You Giving This Year?

Cierra Waugh - Erin McHale - Toni Adler - Enid Otoo - Rashid Hall -  
Sophomore Sophomore Senior Junior Junior



I want to give my mother a Sephora gift card for \$100 because it's her favorite store, and she's my favorite person.



I'm going to give handmade quilts to the Lexington Ave Women's Shelter with the Go Green and Fashion Clubs!



Every year I buy gifts for needy children. I plan to do the same this year because the smile on their faces when you give them a present is so rewarding.



J.C. Penny is having an Angel's Charity. I am planning on buying a very cute dress for a deserving girl. Christmas is such a beautiful time; everyone should be happy.



For Christmas, I will probably give someone a smile and a hand shake.

Dickson Tan - Terrence Gorman - Lauren Velocci - Nicole Casanova - Joseph Bilello -  
Freshman Freshman Junior Junior Sophomore



I will give a \$100 gift card to H&M to my friend Shannon.



I will get headphones and a sweatshirt for my friend Erica.



For Christmas, I will give someone something simple and meaningful. That is very important during this holiday season.



During this time of year, I try to buy the ones I love something that they wouldn't normally buy for themselves. Making people feel special is my goal!



This Christmas, I will be getting my father a Giants jersey and my mother a chef's hat.



# Cultural Holiday Traditions

By Rachel Maldonado

"Tis the season!" ...Tis the season for what, exactly? In the United States, Thanksgiving marks the beginning of the holiday season, but when exactly does it end? Most would think on New Year's Day, January 1st. However, this isn't the case for many Hispanic-Christian families living in America. They still have the Christmas tree up, anticipating the next equally important holiday on their calendar.

The Epiphany was not always celebrated by Hispanics alone, as many European countries considered it as important as Christmas, but as time wore on the holiday became a little less significant each year. The Epiphany is normally celebrated on January 6th as "Three Kings Day" or "El Dia de los Reyes." It is tradition for children to put grass or hay in a box to leave out for the Wise Men's camels. In exchange for this, the Wise Men will take the grass and leave gifts behind; a tradition that is much like leaving cookies for Santa Claus.

Saint Joseph's College student Goeyn Lee does not celebrate the traditional American holiday, Thanksgiving. She and her family celebrate the Korean Thanksgiving holiday, Chuseok (pronounced choo-suk). It lands on the 15th day of the 18th month on the lunar calendar. Goeyn and her family celebrate by preparing newly harvested fruits and vegetables and then sharing a feast, much like the American Thanksgiving. They also have an ancestral ceremony, in which they pay their respects to their ancestors, and give them thanks for the food the family has prepared on this day. Another holiday Goeyn and her family celebrate is "Seollal." It's their most important holiday, which marks the New Year on the lunar calendar. For this coming New Year, 2012, the holiday will land on the 23rd of January. During this time, it is tradition for the elders to give money to the younger generations in the family. Goeyn and her family, like many other Koreans, also celebrate January 1st as New Years.

It is often mistaken that Hanukkah is the most important holiday in the Jewish religion. It is relatively minor, however, compared to their New Year, Rosh Hashanah. Rosh Hashanah is celebrated in a span of two days. This is the time in which Jews cleanse themselves for the New Year. Yom Kippur is the most solemn and holiest day of their calendar. Just over a week after Rosh Hashanah, Jewish families spend 25 hours fasting and praying. This is done because they believe God hasn't sealed their fate for the New Year. Hanukkah may fall on any days between late November to late December. Although it is a minor holiday, it is an important holiday in Jewish tradition. A candle is lit on the menorah each night until the eighth day and the children are given a nightly gift during this time.

Even though it begins and ends at different times for numerous cultures, we are in the middle of the holiday season. This is the season of family, traditions (old and new), and reconciling as the year comes to an end. As the weather gets colder, and the nights get longer, we find warmth and light around those we love and care about. 'Tis the season of hope and good tidings. Happy holidays, whichever holidays you celebrate, and have a great New Year!

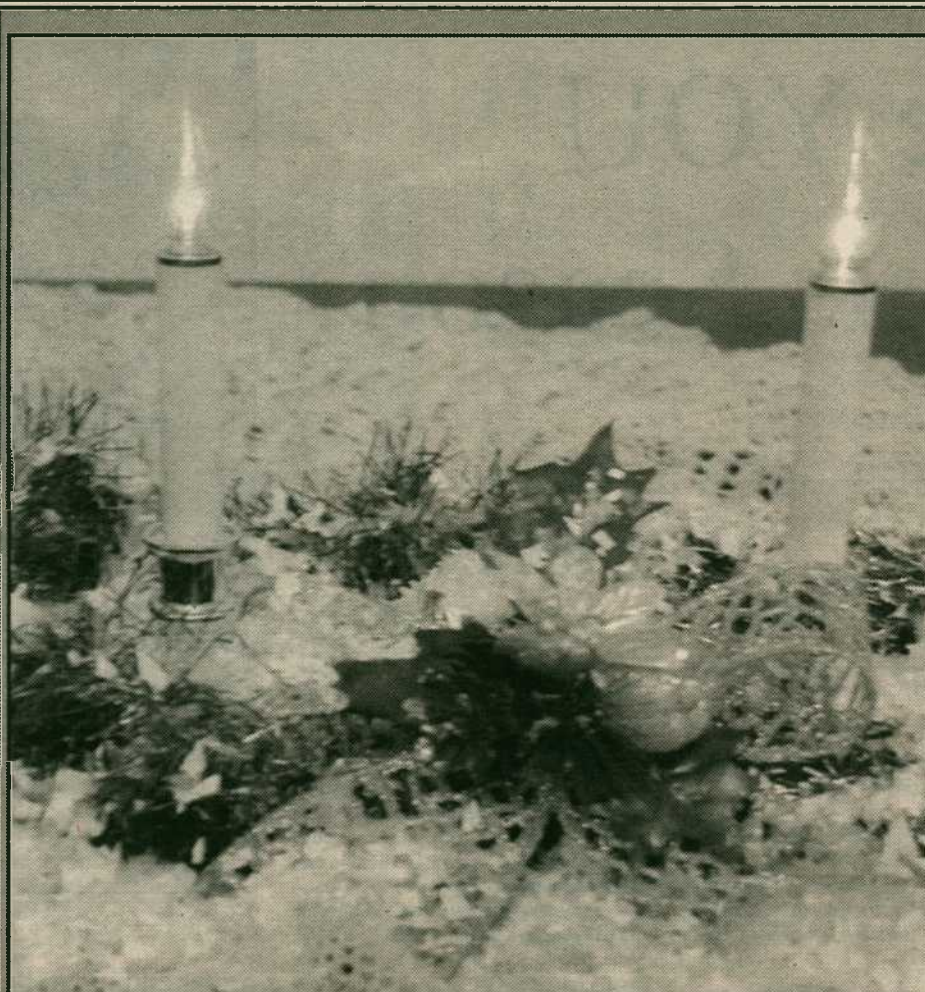


Photo Credit: Robert Jurman

# Holiday Season Movie Guide

By Trey Norwood

It seems like the end of Fall and the beginning of Winter are turning into the new Summer Movie Season. With movies like "Mission: Impossible - Ghost Protocol," "The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo," "The Adventures of Tintin," and "The Descendants" opening there are enough movies to make all audiences happy.

"The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo" is the American adaptation of the best-selling novel by Stieg Larsson. The story revolves around journalist Mikael Blomkvist, who is searching for a woman who has been missing for 40 years with the help of Lisbeth Salander, a young computer hacker. "Dragon Tattoo" is directed by David Fincher, director of "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button" and "The Social Network," and stars Daniel Craig as Mikael Blomkvist and Rooney Mara as Lisbeth Salander. If you don't enjoy brutal violence, you may want to steer clear of this. This will more than likely be a hit since the book has sold millions of copies and David Fincher has an avid fanbase.

"Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows" is the sequel to the 2009 hit "Sherlock Holmes." Not much is known about the plot of this one besides the fact that Sherlock and Watson are teaming up again to take down their famous nemesis Professor Moriarty, and that Sherlock's older brother will be making an appearance. Guy Ritchie returns to direct along with Robert Downey Jr. and Jude Law, returning as Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson, respectively. This'll be a bit with fans of the first and action fans alike. If you didn't like the first one, you're not going to like this one.

"Mission: Impossible - Ghost Protocol" is the fourth movie in the "Mission: Impossible" franchise. When IMF, the organization that protagonist Ethan Hunt works for, is framed for bombing the Kremlin, Hunt and his new team must go rogue to clear the organization and themselves. "Ghost Protocol" is directed by Brad Bird, director of "The In-

credibles" and "Ratatouille," and stars Tom Cruise, Jeremy Renner, Simon Pegg, and Paula Patton. I'm not sure how many people are honestly anticipating this movie. I know it's getting a whole bunch of advertising, which usually means the studio isn't sure if people know that movie even exists. Honestly, the only reason I'm going to see this is because I'm a fan of Brad Bird.

"The Adventures of Tintin" is a CG 3D movie and one of two movies (the other being "War Horse") coming out in December directed by Steven Spielberg. Produced by Peter Jackson, director of "The Lord of the Rings," "Tintin" is an adaptation of the French comic book series written and drawn by Hergé. Tintin and Captain Haddock, along with Tintin's dog Snowy, search for a sunken ship commanded by Haddock's ancestor. Already an enormous box office and critical hit in all of Europe, the big question is if it'll do well in North America, specifically the States. Very few people in America know of Tintin, which means that the movie is riding on the fact that Spielberg filmed it in 3D and that Jackson made sure the art style was almost exactly like the comics. Steven Spielberg has been trying to make this movie for about 22 years now so I doubt it'll fail.

In "The Descendants" George Clooney stars as man who must reconnect with his daughters after his wife suffers a boating accident. While trying to reconnect with his eldest daughter, George Clooney's character learns that his wife is cheating on him. He packs up his daughters and they go on a trip to find the man. Both George Clooney and Shailene Woodley, star of "The Secret Life of the American Teenager," are getting Oscar buzz for Best Actor and Best Actress awards.

"The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo," "Mission: Impossible - Ghost Protocol," and "The Adventures of Tintin" all come out on December 23rd. "Sherlock Holmes" comes out on December 16th, and "The Descendants" is out now.

# Black Friday, Booming Sales

By Diana Kessel

At around 8 PM on Thanksgiving night, I climbed into Mike Panico's car along with members of his family to take advantage of the crazy deals happening at Wal-Mart. We headed to Green Acres mall, on the border of Nassau county and Queens. On my short, domestic list were a 30-piece Tupperware set and a 3-dollar food chopper. Mike and his family were going for video games, movies, and a \$90, 19-inch, flat-screen television. We expected an insane line, but oddly enough this was not the case. My products went on sale at 10 PM, and the electronics went on sale at 12AM, so there was time to roam the store, and stake claim in wanted material objects.

A plan is absolutely necessary for Black Friday. Any given store can resemble Jurassic Park once the security guards turn away. For those who do not know, smaller and boxed items are secured in stacks, held tightly in saran wrap, with a security guard standing watch. In my case, I stood by the Tupperware as dozens of bloodthirsty women broke in early with every intention of storing and preserving their leftovers! A full-out brawl ensued when customers broke in early to the 3-dollar waffle makers and food choppers. This brawl was not exclusive to this store, as video of fights that had happened around the country over these same products were soon up on YouTube. These fights are not usually started over the product, but rather the sale. I'm sure if every waffle-maker fight victim was interviewed, they may not need the appliance, but the price was just too hard to resist. "Tough times" aside, some people, myself included, will always be cheap as dirt.

Later in the night, I found a food chopper thrown among the merchandise casualties. I snagged it for myself, but couldn't help but wonder who was possibly injured or screamed at in order to get this cheap, breakable thing. Of course, this is a horrific commentary on our country and our priorities. We all heard the stories of the woman in Los Angeles who pepper-sprayed a crowd to get multiple Xbox consoles. In fact, the Wal-Mart I was at was the same location a man was trampled to death two years ago.

Is Black Friday worth it? It depends on what you're getting. Many of these sales stay on throughout the holiday weekend, and even leading up to Christmas. Macy's and Wal-Mart had promotions that everything on sale in the stores would remain the same price online on "Cyber Monday," a day of online sales. Some people shop on Friday day just to get their gift shopping out of the way. If they are able to tolerate the crowds and get the cheaper price, I say go for it. I spent less than \$20 on about \$50+ of merchandise, so I was overjoyed with my purchases and gifts. There is no reason for the looting and reckless behavior, but no matter how organized a store may be with merchandise, they have absolutely no control over the behavior of the shoppers coming for the goods.

In total, the Panicos and I got everything we set out for. The checkout line was ruthless. Waiting in that line started at around 12:15 a.m., and our party didn't get out until 2:30 a.m. Mike said several times throughout the night, "This is ridiculous. I am never doing this again." With half price video games and 2-dollar DVDs? See you in line next year!